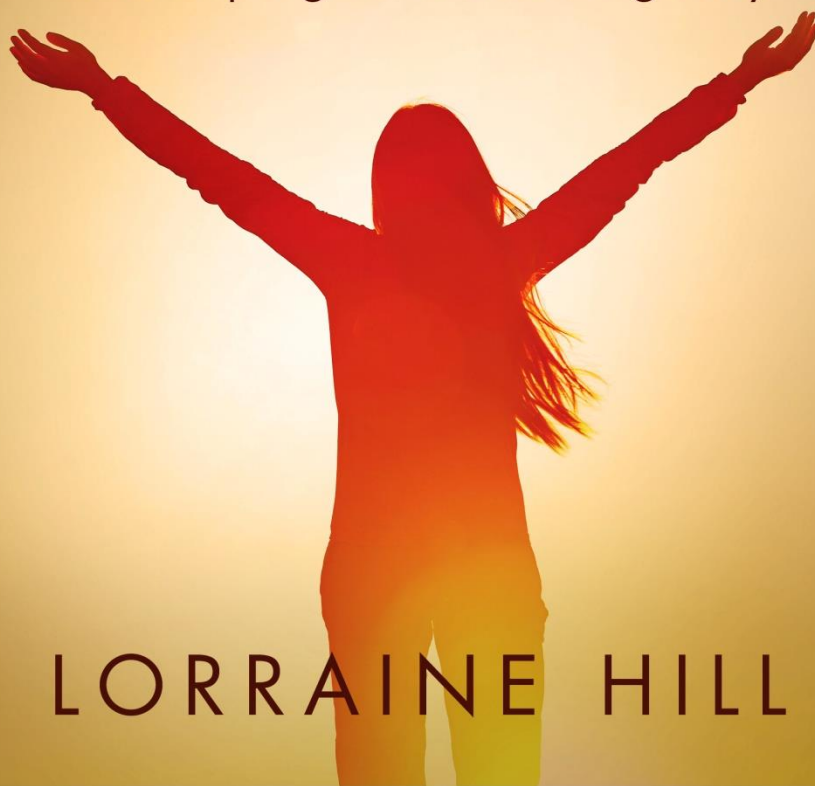


DEEPENING YOUR WORSHIP

A Bible Study on
Worshiping God Extravagantly



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LEADERS GUIDE

INTRODUCTION

Welcome!

I am so excited that you have decided to lead the *Deepening Your Worship* Bible study. The heart of this study is that people will experience a deeper level of worship and realize their true calling in life – to bring glory to God.

By choosing to lead this study and help lead Christians deeper into God’s Word, you will be given the opportunity by God to change people’s lives and impact them for eternity. I can’t wait to hear how God’s Word grows and changes your group. Thank you for your willingness to be used by God in this way!

This Leader’s Guide will equip you to lead this study by providing administrative information and general instructions. These are only suggestions, however, because each of you has the magnificent Holy Spirit in you, and He can equip you far better than I in leading this study. Even more importantly, the Holy Spirit knows the participants of your group and knows their needs, so I strongly urge you to follow His guiding hand.

OVERVIEW OF THE BIBLE STUDY

The Deepening Your Worship study is an eight week in-depth Bible study. Each week contains daily homework for five days. The estimated time to complete the homework is about thirty minutes. The homework includes a variety of questions, like fill-in-the-blank statements, multiple choice questions, yes/no questions, and matching questions. This allows the participant to take the material and personally apply it to his or her life. There are also Challenge questions which allow a participant to go deeper into the Word.

NOTES

PREPARING FOR YOUR BIBLE STUDY CONTINUED

- Create nametags for individual participants and keep several extras available. In the early stages, nametags are helpful in assisting participants to bond with each other and feel comfortable sharing personal information.
- Have a leadership meeting before you start the study. Go over leadership roles, establish expectations, and discuss the responsibilities of Small Group leaders (see *Facilitating Small Groups* section below).
- Depending on your group, you may want to have a mid-semester and end of year fellowship. This allows all the participants to grow deeper in their relationships with each other. It is also nice to have food at the first meeting to kick off the study.

NOTES

CREATING SMALL GROUPS

Small group discussion is an important part of this study because it allows individuals the opportunity to share what God has revealed to them through the study and ask questions of other believers to increase in their own understanding. It also creates community and builds fellowship, which is important within the body of Christ. Participants can listen, encourage and pray for one another. It is amazing how God often places people who need each other in the same groups so that they can minister to one another during the study.

The most effective size for small groups seems to be around 10-12 people. A group of more than twelve people tends to not allow each individual the opportunity to share.

NOTES

WEEK 1 - OUR HIGHEST CALLING

I am so excited to spend this time with you! I know God has some amazing things to reveal to each of you and cannot wait to hear your stories! May the Lord richly bless you, your study, and the participants!

THEME FOR THE WEEK ~

We were made by God for God to worship him and to bring him glory. As we seek to worship God, he wants authenticity from believers; worship that is in spirit and truth.

SUGGESTED DISCUSSION QUESTIONS ~

Day 1 ~ Created to Worship

- For whom does all of creation exist (Romans 11:36, Hebrews 2:10)?
- Have you ever substituted worship of one of God's created things for worship of God himself?

Day 2 ~ A Way of Life

- What is your favorite definition of worship? Why?
- Do you view worship more as a one-time act, such as on a Sunday morning, or a continual act?

Day 3 ~ A Divine Encounter

- Why is it important to worship in truth? Can you think of some groups who worship but who do not worship in truth?
- Is it okay to be zealous for God but not have a correct knowledge of who he is? See Romans 10:2.

Day 4 ~ Dangerous Delight

- Why is it important to worship in spirit? Is the Lord fooled by our outward actions (1 Samuel 16:7)?
- Do you ever find yourself worshipping like the Pharisees or the Samaritans?

Day 5 ~ Standing in Awe

- Do you feel that you have a good understanding of God and his nature?
- Which one of God's attributes made the biggest impression on you? Why?

WEEK 2 – SERVING WITH PASSION

THEME FOR THE WEEK ~

God created us with spiritual gifts to serve him and to bring him glory. And our service to God is actually part of our worship.

SUGGESTED DISCUSSION QUESTIONS ~

Day 1 ~ God's Unique Workmanship

- Read Ephesians 2:8–10. What do you learn about serving God from Ephesians 2:10?
- Share a time when you or someone you know used his or her spiritual gift to edify the body of Christ.

Day 2 ~ A Fruitful Branch

- What do you learn from Zechariah 4:6 about the importance of the Holy Spirit for our service?
- Recall a time when God pruned you. What happened?

Day 3 ~ The Sufficiency of God

- How did God repeatedly encourage Gideon? How does this encourage you?
- Has God ever helped you by doing the opposite of what you initially expected?

Day 4 ~ An Inconvenient Service

- What did you learn about serving others from the parable of the Good Samaritan?
- Read Colossians 4:5 and evaluate your use of time. Are you making your time count for eternity?

Day 5 ~ Forgetting Past Failures

- What sweet words of encouragement do you find in Isaiah 43:18–19?
- Have you ever felt like Peter and failed the Lord? Do you ever struggle with feelings of worthlessness?

WEEK 3 – BECOMING LIVING SACRIFICES

THEME FOR THE WEEK ~

In worship, we offer our bodies as living sacrifices to the Lord. This involves our heart, mind, body, and will. It is not a mechanical act or rite that we routinely perform; it is our hearts and souls enjoined to God, glorifying and praising him with our whole being.

SUGGESTED DISCUSSION QUESTIONS ~

Day 1 ~ Presenting Our Bodies

- What do you learn about worship from Romans 12:1?
- Do you act as a living sacrifice, obedient to God's will for your life? If not, then what holds you back from giving your all to God?

Day 2 ~ Offering Our Minds

- To what are we not to be conformed (Romans 12:2)?
- What types of things do you normally allow into your mind (i.e., worrisome thoughts, lustful thoughts, unbelieving thoughts, and so forth)?

Day 3 ~ Surrendering Our Hearts

- Can you think of anything that competes with your devotion to God (i.e., your career, hobbies, family)? What about your service to God?
- Do you ever find yourself loving the blessings or gifts of God more than God himself?

Day 4 ~ Acting in Obedience

- What challenges you most about the passage on Abraham and Isaac (Genesis 22)?
- Share a time when God asked you to do something that was challenging.

Day 5 ~ Extravagant Worship

- Can you think of a time when your worship or someone else's worship left a fragrance, revealing God's majesty to the world?
- Can you think of an instance in which you did something that the world might consider waste but which God approved of?

WEEK 4 – WALKING BY FAITH

THEME FOR THE WEEK ~

Worship involves faith in God and obedience to his name. Wherever we are in life, whatever we do, whether big acts or small, we have the opportunity to worship God by trusting him and relying on him. In fact, our faith beautifully displays the glory of God to the world around us.

SUGGESTED DISCUSSION QUESTIONS ~

Day 1 ~ Standing Firm

- Share an example of how living by faith can reveal God's glory.
- According to Romans 10:17, how can we increase our faith?

Day 2 ~ A Time to Trust

- Can you relate to the Israelites? Have you ever been in a situation where things progressed from bad to worse, but in the end God delivered you?
- According to Exodus 8:25–28, did Moses compromise with Pharaoh? How have you been tempted to compromise?

Day 3 ~ Against All Odds

- Which path did the Israelites take (Exodus 13:17–18)? Can you recall an instance in which the Lord took you the longer path? How could a shorter path have hurt you instead of helped you?
- What strikes you most about God delivering the Israelites and parting the Red Sea (Exodus 14:1–22)?

Day 4 ~ Plagued by Unbelief

- Are you surprised by God's judgment on the Israelites' unbelief (Numbers 14)? What does this tell you about the seriousness of unbelief in our lives?
- Have you ever chosen to return to parts of your old life? Why?

Day 5 ~ Experiencing the Unimaginable

- Share a time when the Lord encouraged you through a person or an event before he called you to step out on faith.
- Do you think it required faith for the Israelites to follow the Lord's commands and to march around Jericho (Joshua 6:1-20)?

WEEK 5 – LIFTING HOLY HANDS

*T*hank you for leading this study. You are helping others to deepen their relationship with God and their worship! I know it requires a tremendous amount of time and commitment on your part, and I am so thankful for your willingness. You are touching these ladies lives for eternity!

THEME FOR THE WEEK ~

Understanding God's holiness impacts our desire for holiness and purity, which in turn impacts our worship. Without understanding how holy God is, we will continue to play with sin and think that God does not mind and that our worship is acceptable to him.

SUGGESTED DISCUSSION QUESTIONS ~

Day 1 ~ The Holiness of God

- Were you surprised by the importance of God's holiness to his nature?
- What did you learn from Isaiah's vision of God's holiness?

Day 2 ~ A Hard Lesson

- How did God reveal his holiness in dealing with Nadab and Abihu (Leviticus 10:1-3)? Does this surprise you?
- Have you ever presumed upon God, knowing that he would forgive you and so sinned?

Day 3 ~ The Seriousness of Sin

- According to Ecclesiastes 8:11, why do we sometimes disregard the seriousness of sin?
- Do you view your sin seriously? Do you avoid sin or do you flirt with it at times?

Day 4 ~ Protecting Our Purity

- Are your media choices (television, movies, internet, etc.) honoring to the Lord? Are there any practical steps or boundaries you need to establish?
- What are we to take captive (2 Corinthians 10:5)? Why is this important?

Day 5 ~ The Beauty of Repentance

- Have you ever considered your repentance to be an act of worship?
- What is the difference between worldly sorrow and godly sorrow (2 Corinthians 7:9-11)?

WEEK 6 – OFFERING PRAISE AND PRAYER

Can you believe that we are over half way done with the study? Hopefully, God has enabled your group to better understand what true worship is. Last week on holiness was a tough week, but remain encouraged. God sees what we cannot see – our glorious future and women of God we are meant to be!

THEME FOR THE WEEK ~

Both prayer and praise are important elements of our worship. Prayer allows us to know the Lord deeper and more intimately. And the more we know the Lord, the easier it is to praise him and tell others of his greatness.

SUGGESTED DISCUSSION QUESTIONS ~

Day 1 ~ Proclaiming God's Greatness

- Read Psalm 57:9. Are you making known the Lord's praises among others like your family members, neighbors, and coworkers?
- How different do you think our lives would be if we allowed praise to go before us in all situations, like King Jehoshaphat?

Day 2 ~ A Sacrifice of Praise

- How was Job's response a sacrifice of praise (Job 1:20–22, Job 2:10)?
- Share about a time when you offered a sacrifice of praise to God.

Day 3 ~ Rising Incense

- Reflect on a time when you passionately prayed for something. Did you feel close to God? What was the outcome?
- Have you ever thought about your prayers rising as incense before God (Psalm 141:1–2)? Does this change the way you view prayer?

Day 4 ~ A Model Prayer

- Whose will should we pray (1 John 5:14–15)? Do you pray God's will?
- What encouraged you most in the Lord's Prayer? What challenged you the most?

Day 5 ~ Power Unleashed

- What does the parable in Luke 11:5-13 teach you about prayer?
- Are you allowing the Holy Spirit to guide your prayers, or does your prayer list seem more like a shopping list of personal wants?

WEEK 7 – THE BATTLE FOR WORSHIP

THEME FOR THE WEEK ~

There is currently a battle going on for our worship. God wants us to worship him and fulfill our true purpose in this life, while Satan wants us to become ensnared by false gods and live a distracted life.

SUGGESTED DISCUSSION QUESTIONS ~

Day 1 ~ Ensnared by False Gods

- What do you learn from John Wesley's definition of idolatry: "Whatever is loved, feared, delighted in, or depended on, more than God, that we make a god of"?
- Why does the Lord prohibit the making of idols (Isaiah 40:18,25, Isaiah 44:6–19)?

Day 2 ~ Fleeing from Idolatry

- What are some false gods in your life?
- Are all false gods bad?

Day 3 ~ Choosing God

- Read Psalm 16:4. Will we be happy if we chase after other gods?
- If we know that God is the true god, then why do we succumb to false gods?

Day 4 ~ Spiritual Adultery

- What happened to Israel's love for God over time (Jeremiah 2:1-13)? Has this ever happened to you?
- How does our love for God impact our worship, our spiritual faithfulness, and our desire for other gods?

Day 5 ~ For the Glory of God

- Does it seem counterintuitive that fulfillment is found in living for the Lord and not in living for ourselves?
- Read John 3:22–30. What strikes you about John the Baptist in this passage?

WEEK 8 – REJOICING IN GOD’S HOUSE

THEME FOR THE WEEK ~

Corporate worship occurs when we, as the body of Christ, come together and jointly praise God. Corporate worship is not a ritualistic or mundane set of activities that we routinely perform. It is our hearts overjoyed and awed by the Lord’s presence, wanting to acknowledge him and his greatness in the presence of other believers.

SUGGESTED DISCUSSION QUESTIONS ~

Day 1 ~ Worshiping God Together

- What stands out to you about the psalmist’s attitude in Psalm 84:1-4? Is this your attitude to corporate worship?
- How would you describe your Sunday mornings as you prepare for church? If you are not enjoying this time and it feels rushed or stressed, what can you change?

Day 2 ~ Proclaiming God’s Word

- What do you learn about obedience to the Word in James 1:22–25?
- Share a recent instance in which you acted on something you discovered in God’s Word.

Day 3 ~ The Lord’s Supper

- What surprised you most in the 1 Corinthians passage?
- Does what you learned in this day impact the way you approach the Lord’s Supper?

Day 4 ~ Giving as Worship

- Do you think of giving as an act of worship?
- Reflect on a time when you gave generously even though you did not have the funds to give. How was God faithful?

Day 5 ~ Fellowshiping with Other Believers

- Have you ever judged someone else’s worship?
- Scripture speaks of believers helping each other through many “one another” statements. What did you learn from some of these “one another” statements?

A FINAL NOTE

Thank you again for your willingness to lead this study. Because of your faithfulness, many people will be able to go deeper in the Word and their relationship with God. I know God is doing an amazing work in your Ladies' hearts and I cannot wait to hear their stories! What an amazing privilege to study God's Word with you. I pray that you would continue to grow and mature in Him and to bring Him glory in unimaginable ways!

Lorraine Hill